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ABSTRACT

While this book is directed toward educators and counselors, its concepts are applicable to all who work with youth, including parents. What the author does is to look honestly at one fact--that a linkage exists between serious drug misuse and lack of self-esteem--and to turn this fact around to encourage the building of self-esteem from K-12 as the best defense against self-destructive behavior such as serious drug misuse. In consideration of this book's content, people whose lives and work brought them to the drug scene have shared counsel and the common conviction that application of these ideas can both enrich life and enhance awareness of its worth. The book is for anyone concerned with the desensitizing aspects of our time. (Author/PC)

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THE DRUG ALTERNATIVE

CG 009 546

by
Mitchell Winn

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PREFACE

While this book is directed toward educators and counselors, its concepts are applicable to all who work with youth — including parents.

Some who read these pages will say, "It's very interesting, but what has this to do with drugs?" The answer is, this isn't a conventional drug manual. We are concerned with drugs — but we view this issue as part of something larger.

Others will say, "It seems to make sense, but it's complicated and probably wouldn't work for some kids." To these we reply, "Yes, it isn't easy ... and yes, some kids won't be able to respond positively." We have no universal solution to any problem.

What we have done is look honestly at a single fact — that a linkage exists between serious drug misuse and lack of self-esteem — and turn this fact around to encourage the building of self-esteem from K through 12 as the best defense against self-destructive behavior such as serious drug misuse.

This book is a reflection of the heart and unashamedly so. In

consideration of its content, people whose lives and work brought them to the drug scene have shared counsel and the common conviction that application of these ideas can both enrich life and enhance awareness of its worth.

What follows is not just for educators any more than it is just for their charges. It is for anyone concerned with the desensitizing aspects of our time.

In this sense, we are all both teachers and students.

— **Mitchell Winn**
Philadelphia, 1974

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1. past as prologue

Drug use is here to stay. In a world where the pressures and uncertainties of everyday life become increasingly complex, the need to find and use personal affirmation or escape mechanisms becomes more acute. Drugs, *including alcohol**, offer a profound and absolute way to relieve oneself temporarily of pressures, real or imaginary, that are part of the survival or identity process.

To argue that drugs, as an escape mechanism, are more lethal than candy bars, science-fiction novels, or even sky-diving, is to miss the point. Millions of dollars have been spent with dubious result in trying to persuade young people that drug use is stupid because it is dangerous. Kids don't respond to this argument any better than their fathers would to the argument that war is lethal, therefore no one should be a soldier. On the drug scene, as in war, it's always "the other guy" who gets hurt.

Yet, the fact remains that thousands of young lives have been damaged or lost because of drug misuse, and the feeling persists, in the anguish of the nation over this problem, that somehow all of us share responsibility for it.

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*Historically, an unreal distinction has been drawn between misuse of "drugs" and misuse of alcohol in which "abuse" of the former leads to *addiction*, while "intemperate" use of the latter leads to *alcoholism*. Despite scientific classification of alcohol as a drug, and despite the fact that alcoholism means addiction to that substance, this illogical dichotomy persists in the dialogue on addiction. Precedent notwithstanding, references to drugs in these pages should be understood to include alcohol use.

Like it or not, educators are involved in the problem to a great degree because they have the opportunity to affect young lives in a very special way. Unencumbered with the emotional connections of family, they can bring the sort of trained objectivity to their relationships with young people few others can. That they have thus far been mostly frustrated in this matter bespeaks no particular inadequacy on their part: they have faltered mainly because they haven't had the tools to do the job. For the truth is, that to date, the approach to the drug dilemma has been an extension of a national policy that sought simplistic solutions to human problems in terms that have been anything but humanistic.

We cannot ameliorate the drug tragedy with the big lie: smoking marijuana does not inevitably lead to shooting heroin. Young people knew this years before drug "experts" acknowledged it.

We cannot ameliorate the drug tragedy by moralizing: in a society where even national leaders show contempt for law on a grand scale, the question of right vs. wrong is meaningless on the street.

We cannot ameliorate the drug tragedy by technological persuasion: all the clinical data in the world is irrelevant to the person overwhelmed by the complexity of life.

We cannot ameliorate the drug tragedy by insensitive Madison Avenue slickness: a billboard that sneeringly asks "Why do you suppose they call it dope?" only serves to alienate further those involved with drugs.

We cannot ameliorate the drug tragedy by hypocrisy: the sanction and even glorification of alcohol as an acceptable form of drug use is an invitation to the young the consequence of which is yet to be felt. Alcoholism is the premier form of addiction in America.

And, we cannot ameliorate the drug problem by consigning those gripped by illicit drugs to a life of alternate, but controlled and socially "acceptable" drugs that are equally addicting.

To the educator sincerely committed to helping the young gain a positive perspective on the drug scene, these approaches serve only to exacerbate an already formidable situation.

Fortunately, a new national concept is emerging which emphasizes positive, rather than negative approaches, and some states, like California, require basic health education along affective lines as a prerequisite for teacher certification.

Still, there are no simple solutions to the drug problems.

And there are no single solutions to the drug problem.

But if any approach is to succeed, recognition must be given the fact that escape from certain realities is part of the human condition, and that, moreover, escapist behavior isn't necessarily counter-productive.

The Common Factor

Drug casualties come from all walks of life. No ethnic or religious group, no social set, economic class or profession is without victims. The pervasiveness of serious drug misuse leaves no area untouched. In our highly mobile society with its sophisticated communications systems, the drug scene can be anywhere.

And yet, despite the variegated backgrounds of those who become enmeshed with drugs, one common factor emerges when drug use reaches self-destructive levels: its victims are, with rare exception, unhappy with themselves.

Which is *not* to say that drug dependents are without any sense of self-esteem. Nor is it to say that anyone in the straight world, the non-drug world, who has risen above the pressures that drug dependents succumb to, should feel superior. It is simply to say that those entrapped by drugs usually have insufficient internal resources to rise above the pressures and self-doubts that are part of the human experience.

That drug dependents generally think poorly of themselves is well documented. Sociologists, penologists and almost everyone in some way associated with behavioral science

agrees that fortifying self-esteem is a key part of dependency rehabilitation.

Why, then, have the various approaches to the drug problem been so demonstrably unsuccessful? Why is the recidivism rate among drug dependents so high?

The Concept

There are no clear-cut answers to these questions. But there may be a clue in the fact that creating self-destructive behavior almost invariably occurs after that behavior has been manifested, or, to put it differently, after a low level of self-esteem has permitted the individual to succumb to pressures and self-doubts.

Which leads to the concept of this book ... and explains why educators may play a key role in alleviating the drug problem: *The best way to counter serious drug misuse is to develop and reinforce self-esteem during an individual's formative years – especially while he is a child.*

The various drugs of misuse and their effects, and ways of identifying and treating drug users, are not the subject of this book. Still, this is important information for drug discussions, and educators unfamiliar with it should contact their State Departments of Education, or one of several national information sources* for appropriate resource material. What this book is concerned with is the area of drug misuse for which virtually no solid data exists: the "why" of it.

What there is to work with are some grim after-the-fact facts: that thousands of young people become drug casualties; that little of what has been done to deal with the drug problem has been very effective; and that something must be attempted to counter drug misuse long before it might happen.

The aim of this book is to sensitize educators to some of the important behavioral presures that affect how *they* interact with

*See Appendix, page 61.

people. The idea is that, given this understanding, educators will be better equipped to discover and fortify positive aspects of young lives, and by so doing, ameliorate the problems of growing up — including drugs.

Building self-esteem is not only important as a drug misuse countermeasure; it is central to the total learning and life process.

2. pressures and risk taking

While human failure can sometimes be gauged, no one has yet devised any sound way to measure success; it simply doesn't lend itself to statistical analysis, particularly where behavior is concerned.

But it is possible to gauge the success or effectiveness of communication *while it is happening*. The degree of leveling, interaction, and trust sharing that a teacher enjoys in dealing with young people is an important indicator of this. For this reason, any attempt to deal with ideas concerning behavior should occur in as small a group as possible. One simply cannot get sensitive interaction when dealing with people on a mass or lecture basis.

Critical to any understanding of behavior is understanding risk-taking. In our competitive society, the risk taker is a hero: the greater the risk survived, the more impressive the individual who survived it. If Charles Lindbergh or Edmund Hillary hadn't taken — and survived — great risks, who would remember them? And what is it that impels people to race fast cars, fight bulls or go over Niagara Falls in a barrel?

For all such people, more is involved than any tangible gain. For each individual, it's a way to prove something to himself, a way to enhance self-image, a form of do-it-yourself personal reinforcement.

So too for the young person growing up. Each achievement, each challenge met, is part of the maturing

process *in terms of the individual's self-perception*. To be able to say, "I did that," especially to one's peers, is to have passed another benchmark in growing up. Our culture places high value on sophistication, or, to use the lexicon of the young, "on being cool."

And, being cool can range from walking a railroad track or riding no-hands on a bicycle, to smoking cigarettes, swiping and drinking dad's beer, or doing drugs. Every child goes through this ... and usually on to other things more mundane. But for some, certain kinds of risk taking become a *raison d'etre*, a means whereby, through escalation, they draw attention to themselves and become, even if for the moment, a kind of hero. For the person into drugs as his form of self-expression, the overdose survived becomes a badge of distinction. In his world, he's not unlike the adventurer who alone faces and conquers the difficult mountain. Cheating death is everyone's fantasy.

To just acknowledge that risk taking is part of discovering self-esteem is, however, insufficient to equip the educator to recognize its parameters and what these parameters mean. Equally important are identifying and understanding the pressures that are part of the process; being aware that often these pressures conflict; and, most significantly, recognizing the clear relationship between risk taking and decision making.

Identifying the kinds of pressures youngsters must cope with is difficult because many pressures overlap. The process is facilitated somewhat, however, by grouping them into two general categories: *internal* and *external*. While the groupings may appear arbitrary, the need for understanding their components is vital.

* * *

INTERNAL PRESSURES

Internal pressures are those which relate to gender, cultural traditions, expectations and roles. Unlike external pressures which bear on all young people, internal pressures are selectively applicable. Major subdivisions into which such pressures could be divided include:

(1) Male/Female
(2) Ethnic
(3) Religious
(4) Urban/Non-urban
(5) Patriotic

Internal pressures affect individual risk taking in terms of pre-shaping behavior without reference to risks. Teachers also are subject to such pressures, and their responses to them can, in turn, affect the way youngsters achieve.

Male/Female

The greatest determinant of role expectation is gender. Until recently, our society generally accepted well-established preconceptions about sexual roles. Classically, girls were expected to be soft, sweet, emotionally demonstrative persons who would grow up to become housewives and mothers. Boys were expected to be tough, brave and unsentimental (big boys don't cry), and grow up to become breadwinners, husbands and fathers.

The female who valued a career over motherhood was widely scorned. The male who was disinterested in having a family was likely to be labeled "immature." But males could hold almost any job, and all top decision-making occupations, particularly in the business world, were their sole province. Jobs thought suitable for females were generally in the service areas or positions ancillary to what men were doing, such as

waitress, nurse, secretary, and the like. A female professional was a rare exception, and in many cases, females in such occupations, unless self-employed, were paid less for their work than were men similarly occupied. A common rationale for this inequity was that women were unreliable employees in that they would inevitably leave to have babies or to accompany husbands building careers elsewhere.

Since World War II, when women filled many "male" jobs for absent servicemen, community attitudes towards women in many occupations have been slowly changing. Having proved they could do well in virtually any kind of work, women increasingly have demanded a better chance for employment — and at wages comparable to those paid their male counterparts.

Change in traditional roles for females got its greatest impetus, however, in the sixties with the development and widespread acceptance of new and highly effective types of birth control for women. Freed from the biological entrapment of pregnancy, many women began to question the concept of universal motherhood and for some, marriage became a less desirable goal.

Other factors that changed traditional female roles were: growing awareness of overpopulation as an ecological concern; wider community acceptance of nonmarital cohabitation; and women liberation movements which sought and obtained national legislation ensuring equal employment opportunities.

The widespread advent of contraception and more liberal abortion laws has had a profound effect on what was heretofore the greatest area of risk taking for young females. In a like manner, it has affected sexual risk taking for young males. Sexual roles for young people have been greatly altered by these changes. Females are becoming more aggressive in making sexual demands on partners, and casual relationships involving sex are more common.

Changes in male role have been less profound than those

for females, but they have been nonetheless significant. Unlike females, who have struggled for more opportunity in many fields, males have become less "success" oriented than once was the case. In part a concomitant of the expansion of female roles, males are now somewhat less inclined to assume responsibilities which formerly were part of society's expectations of them. While most young males still adhere to traditional notions of family formation and career development, substantial numbers are delaying the process while exploring alternate life styles within the context of situations which impose minimal personal restraints.

With the "shotgun marriage" becoming less of a phenomenon and with dependency on male support less urgent than it once was, an increasing number of young people, aware of the high level of marital failure experienced by their elders, are delaying marriage and family formation.

Recognition of these important changes in male/female role expectations is critical to the teacher seeking ways to reinforce self-esteem in the young. This is particularly significant in view of the fact that parents, for the most part, find it hard to accept these changes. The teacher who thinks little girls should play with dolls and little boys should think of becoming doctors or lawyers, could be sowing seeds of resistance that might later be expressed by serious drug misuse. Reinforcement of self-esteem for the young of both sexes now requires that all life aspirations be encouraged for everyone. If little Peggy wants to be president of anything when she grows up ... why not?

Ethnic

Not long ago, schoolchildren were taught that America was a great melting pot for peoples from all over the world. Indeed, part of our sense of greatness was derived from the

belief that it didn't matter who your grandpa was or where he came from — we were all one happy national family.

No more.

Largely as a result of the struggle of blacks to enter the mainstream, the concept of racial or ethnic pride has been developed to the point that the Anglicizing of America is now a thing of the past. Today, people paste decals on automobiles indicating Italian, German, French and What-Have-You heritage. Third or fourth-generation Americans who don't know the mother tongue of their ancestors are seeking clues to their origins.

The desire for identity in this form, as a further reinforcer of self-esteem, is one kind of answer to the racial slurs and innuendos that have been an ugly part of American life for too long. The Chicano sitting in a Texas classroom doesn't feel like being a second-class citizen; pretty or not, the black girl newly arrived in a suburban classroom believes that black is beautiful; the Jewish boy who wants to be an actor doesn't daydream about a new homogenized name to go up in lights; and Kowalski isn't ashamed to have kalbase in his lunchbox.

Accepting differences instead of pretending they don't exist is a new and better way of things. But it's equally important, in dealing with and reinforcing the feelings of young people, that there be understanding of what these differences imply. For example, if the Chicano boy were to find himself in trouble and be required to participate in group counseling, that decision could be viewed as a great insult by his family. Mexican-Americans pride themselves in holding family counsel on serious matters.

For the youngster coming from a strong ethnic background, risk taking in any form that could create hero status is a powerful stimulus. If he succeeds, it's like a success for all of his kind. Ethnic heroes have been part of the American scene for a long time.

For blacks, Chicanos and American Indians, ethnic origin is more than mere declaration: they are what they look like ... and that's more demanding, emotionally, than being a self-proclaimed white anything. Moreover, generations of hard experience in dealing with an often intolerant white majority have made them particularly sensitive to any kind of interaction with "outsiders." By way of illustration, the white teacher dealing with a black child can expect some degree of mistrust and must be aware that "visible ethnics" will resort to time-proved techniques for maintaining distance with people they have no reason to trust. For blacks, dealing with "whitey" may require "shucking and jiving" — a kind of "play dumb" dialogue used as self-protection.

Some believe that large ethnic concentrations of youngsters require teachers of the same ethnic extraction. According to this theory, a black teacher who grew up in the ghetto is best able to empathize with black kids from similar circumstance. But growing up in the ghetto does not necessarily make one an effective teacher, anymore than growing up in a comfortable white suburb means one is without sensitivity to the hopes and fears all children have. Teachers can be effective in the classroom no matter where they come from — provided they recognize their own origins as well as those of their students and what this all implies. If the teacher is aware of these factors, chances are that youngsters who might otherwise resort to serious risk taking to prove their ethnic worth may find it unnecessary to do so.

Religious

Any religion with substantial numbers of followers has adherents in the United States. Be that as it may, the principal religious force in this country is that derived from the Judeo-Christian heritage as refined by the Protestant Ethic of Calvanist times and adapted, as a modern cultural concept, as the Success Ethic.

The principal tenets of this philosophy are that man is imperfect and must seek to improve himself so that he will be acceptable to God. The concept of reward is also operative here: if a man does well in life it is probably because he is pleasing God; if he has adversity, he is paying for some shortcoming. In either case, he has a chance at acceptance after death provided he conducts himself in a certain way in anticipation of it. Heaven is the reward for all who have measured up.

Risk taking is operative within the religious context in that failure to measure up to God's expectations can consign an individual to a state where his soul can find no peace even after death. From Jewish philosophy comes the basic rules of conduct enunciated in the Ten Commandments. In the main, Christianity is an offshoot of these ideas with a less angry God as the centerpiece and with Jesus represented as a special figure directly sent by God. The Protestant Ethic refinement is that men must toil, and he who toils most mightily has the best chance at heaven after death — as well as material success during life.

In our culture, the Success (Protestant) Ethic has become fundamental to our notion of individual accumulation of goods and use of resources. There are no delineated upper restrictions to what an individual should have, or even hope to have: "The sky's the limit."

Risk taking is very important to those involved in the Success Ethic. Almost every rags-to-riches story involves someone who stepped out of the parade and went another direction to make good. In Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, Willie Loman's failure is underscored by the brother who reminds him: "I went into the jungle a poor man and came out rich at 21!" To be a Success Ethic winner, one must be aggressive, tough, determined and, above all, unsentimental.

Among the young there is a growing uneasiness concerning the Success Ethic. Many believe the accumulation of things isn't worth the struggle it requires. For parents who

have sacrificed much to provide a higher living standard, this seeming ingratitude on the part of their children can become a point of antagonism.

It is also true that for many of the young, the rejection of "things" is part of counter-culture conformity, a temporary trade-off of comfort for the harder life of the poor. Having comfort to fall back on makes poverty easier. It is the rare poor person who wouldn't gladly trade his situation for one of affluence.

Whatever the reason, and however sincere the rejection of the Success Ethic and the accumulative life, it's a kind of risk taking that few parents feel easy about. For them, the alternative life style many youngsters admire is somehow a personal insult. Those who are unwilling to work hard to get things are easily categorized as "bums."

Regrettably, there are many decent parents whose agony over the life style preferences of the young blinds them to valuable endeavors. A university dean whose son dropped out of college to handcraft furniture regarded the decision as a sign of personal failure for them both. How much better it might have been for each person's self-esteem had the father been able to take pride in his son's creativity.

While there is less literal adherence to religious dogma today than several generations ago, many persons base their ethics on biblical or other religious principles. This is particularly true of those who follow Roman Catholic or Protestant Fundamentalist doctrines.

Teachers are not supposed to be concerned with students' religious preferences. But meaningful interaction with young people requires familiarity with their religious philosophies and the ways in which these ideas shape emotional structure. As long as response to these factors is not judgemental, knowledge of them can be very helpful in enhancing interpersonal communication. Equally important, teachers should be aware of the way in which their beliefs may affect their responses.

Religion organized along traditional lines is particularly demanding for today's youth who seem less inclined toward acceptance of its restraints and formalities than their elders. Many churches report declining attendance and interest on the part of the young.

Teachers should not conclude, however, that young people are without religious feeling. What distinguishes them from their parents is their impatience with religious form and church-going. That they may differ with their elders about matters of life style does not necessarily suggest they are less moral. Movements like the Jesus People and others based on both western and eastern religious philosophies indicate substantial interest in religious matters by young people — the principal followers of such sects.

Urban/Non-Urban

At one time, this internal pressure factor would have been delineated Urban/Rural, but today's rural dweller is much more sophisticated than his predecessors, and he is joined by the suburbanite who dabbles at being "country."

The principal difference between the urban and non-urban person is that the city dweller leads a higher intensity life with less sense of security. Consequently, the child who grows up in the city may be more suspicious, less open, and less likely to get into personal sharing than is his non-urban counterpart.

Risk-taking is an every day fact of life in the city. People, traffic, commercial bustle, and criminal activity are just some of the urban child's daily concerns. The urban child is soon confronted with alcohol and other kinds of drugs, and may, moreover, discover that the traffickers in these things (Big Risk Takers) acquire a quasi-hero status.

Because many urban children come from poverty situations, their role models may be older people in the community who have risen above poverty by unusual activities

often outside the law. In the parlance of the street, this is "working a hustle." It might range from numbers running to pimping or drug dealing. The cool hustler — the "Superfly" with flashy clothes and a big custom car — is as much a hero to the impressionable poverty child as was the Lone Ranger to an earlier, nondrug generation.

When you're poor, risk taking can sometimes be more than a way to reinforce identity and self-esteem. Sometimes, it's the requirement for fundamental survival.

Patriotic

Only a generation ago, patriotism was a word almost anyone could define — and all definitions would be pretty much alike.

Not any more.

After sending youth to war three times within 30 years, old concepts of patriotism have become unacceptable to some who argue that "peace is patriotic." The escalation of the Indochina conflict brought this difference into sharp focus in the '70s and became a bitterly divisive national issue. In the main, it was the young who led the opposition to the war.

Risk taking was very much part of the argument. Most older people, particularly those who remembered or served in World War II, felt that military duty was every young man's obligation, regardless of political considerations. Many young people thought the political issues were of prime importance, arguing the war was unjust and a blot against traditional American respect for self-determination of peoples. Accusations of cowardice were met with accusations of murdering. War resistance demonstrations around the nation increased in number and size. Eventually, as casualties from Indochina mounted, more older people began to question the morality of the war and Congress brought pressure to end American involvement in it.

The impact of war resistance on the very young was considerable. Those whose older brothers and sisters opposed their parents on the issue tended to side with their siblings. For some, the death or incapacitation of brothers who had been in the fighting without understanding its relevance to American life was beyond comprehension. Finally, opposition to the war by substantial numbers of veterans of it — some of whom rejected medals for valor they had won on its battlefields — made the conflict one where traditional hero roles became invalid. In short, risk taking in this situation became a loser's game.

The politicizing of the young presents teachers with an extremely delicate situation. Because political considerations are often attended by strong emotional feelings, dealing openly with children on such matters requires special sensitivity. The temptation to take sides when discussing topics like Vietnam, obligation to the nation, the nature of patriotism, and the like is hard to avoid. But because this is a very important internal pressure that will be with children long after they have become adults, it is one of great importance.

The pressure of patriotism is the pressure of conscience.

* * *

EXTERNAL PRESSURES

External pressures are those which tend to affect all young people, no matter what their internal pressure situations may be. Important components are:

(1) Parental
(2) Peer
(3) Authority
(4) Legal
(5) Reward

Risk taking in response to external pressures becomes operative primarily through resistance to the pressures.

Parental

From the time of awareness until adolescence, parent pressure is the principal behavior determinant the young person must adapt to. For some, rigid codes of behavior are expected. For others, a permissiveness that makes virtually no demands is the rule. Whatever the policy of the family, each child is taught that his parents have some kinds of expectations against which his behavior will be measured.

For most youngsters, the learning process begins at home with emphasis on what they should *not* do often exceeding instruction in what should be done. For the teacher interested in dealing effectively with young people, understanding of familial expectations can be an important clue to risk-taking behavior.

While parent pressure doesn't decline with the advent of peer pressure, its influence begins to lessen as soon as the youngster has contact with other children and the family attitudes they represent.

Peer

As the child approaches adolescence, the influence of peer pressure grows in inverse ratio to that of parent pressure, with approval by peers eventually overriding approval by parents as inevitable generational differences come into play. For example, a young girl brought up in a world of birth control may have less reluctance about sexual activity than her mother had a generation ago. With pressure from her contemporaries to experiment with sex or be tagged hopelessly old fashioned, she might find it easier to risk parental disapproval than social ostracism by peers. Then too, there is the time honored inclination toward peer conformity that every younger generation succumbs to — despite equally time honored protestations about individualism.

Form, as often as function, is the bone of contention. Youth has been "getting high" as part of socializing for as long as generations now alive have been around. In grandpa's day, kids got off on bathtub gin. In dad's adolescence, it was "Seven & Seven." For the Aquarian generation, it's been "pot." For the generations to come ... who knows?

An elusive fact about peer pressure is that while it is constant, it is also constantly changing. What is "in" today is passé tomorrow. Additionally, despite a popular notion that the younger generation will inevitably do just as their fathers before them, the nature of behavioral change is cybernetic; each generation learns from the one ahead and the one behind. It is the confusion over this that causes so much of the breakdown in dialogue between parents and their children or between teachers and students. "I just can't talk to him" could as easily be said: "He doesn't take the same risks I did," which in a functional sense just isn't true.

Peer pressure is probably the most profound external pressure the developing person experiences. To be appreciated by one's contemporaries is often the best mirror a child has

when he subsconsciously asks himself, "How am I doing?" If peers approve, while parents do not, chances are the resulting conflict will be resolved in favor of the contemporaries.

Understanding the need for peer approval is fundamental for teachers seeking better interaction with students. But a prerequisite for this is awareness of what current peer pressures may be, as well as awareness of areas of conflict from the home.

Authority

An overlapping pressure that becomes more significant as the child enters school and continues throughout his lifetime is that of authority. It is in this area that the educator is most intimately involved because his role carries with it substantial authority power.

For the youngster, a certain ambivalence is often attached to the authority figure, beginning with parents (who make him feel badly by disapproval or withdrawal of privileges), and extending later to teachers (who can hurt him with grades, detentions, bad reports or recommendations) or policemen (who give him tickets, or make him move from a corner, or call him "kid").

The educator is in a particularly sensitive position because he may find his own sense of self-esteem threatened by the students with whom interaction is required. If a child is rebellious or shows contempt for what the teacher is doing, a natural reaction is to use authority rights to deal with the problem. The difficulty here is that the unpleasant behavioral manifestation may represent just the tip of an iceberg of discontent. If no particular happening precipitates the incident, the teacher must ask himself why his student responded in a manner out of keeping with what was going on.

Much of the problem with authority figures is rigid use of power in petty ways that diminish its value in more critical situations. A group of California educators attending a drug seminar had an example of this when, at the conclusion of their

class, the instructor asked them to line up by twos at the door. Their first response was to laugh at his "cute joke." The instructor reacted to their laugh with a stern face and insisted they do as told. After they reluctantly complied, their rising anger changed to insight when the instructor made a quiet observation on the petty use of authority.

In dealing with the youngster who exhibits problematic behavior, the educator must have an awareness of those factors which affect his own behavior and response patterns — as well as those which impact the student's. Educators also require reinforcement of self-esteem, and, like young people, their actions are often affected by the same internal and external pressures that set role models for them. Sorting out what these pressures are, and knowing how they affect one's feelings and responses are vital to maintaining perspective on the lives of others. An authority figure should mean more to a child than the image of a person with power; more importantly, authority should impart the idea of people sense. Or, as the kids would say: "He's got it together." It's bad grammar, but it's a great compliment.

Legal

The fact that stringent laws exist regarding illicit drugs and their use requires recognition. The legal consequences of drug misuse also affect the problem.

Advocates of strong drug laws argue that the laws are designed to protect people from the deleterious effects of drugs improperly used, and therefore, such laws are good.

Opponents of strong drug laws argue that the laws seek to regulate morality and create another category of victimless crime (along with gambling and prostitution) which, they hold, should not be subject to control. Therefore, such laws are bad.

There are also a number of divergent views, falling

between these two, on the appropriateness of existing law about drugs.

Many who have listened to both arguments feel that debate about drug laws has significance beyond the drug question. What is at stake is the fundamental consideration about whether laws should be invariably respected, whether or not they are deemed moral. In the widespread disregard for drug laws, an erosion in the traditional American respect for law as the backbone of social compact has become a matter of deep concern.

At the heart of the issue are the laws regarding marijuana use. While these prohibitions have become less stringent in their consequences than once was the case, those who oppose the laws cite lack of scientific evidence of marijuana's alleged evils (as confirmed by a presidential commission asked to explore the matter) as reason to decriminalize use of the substance. They say the continuance of marijuana laws in the face of such findings places otherwise law-abiding people into the category of law breakers — and thereby erodes respect for law.

While there are many who agree that Americans should not be guided by "bad" laws, they feel the way to rectify the situation is to amend the laws by due process rather than simply ignore them. Their argument is that laws should be worthy of respect if we are to avoid social chaos — but they should not be flaunted during the process of change.

Whatever one's feelings on this issue, there can be no doubt that the presence of such laws does influence behavior. One of the side effects of drug laws — including those attending marijuana — is the deleterious effect they have had on community/police relationships. While the issue rages on, those charged with enforcement are the men in the middle. Clearly, if police were allowed to enforce laws according to each officer's personal conviction, there would be no legal equity. Therefore, police must enforce the laws as they exist, even though every

action taken relative to marijuana regulations causes resentment in some quarters.

The attitude of the young toward the police is a matter of special concern. Where once the police officer was a respected member of the community whom youngsters could look up to, this is less the case today.

Certainly some measure of this resentment has been well earned: the bad record compiled by some police in dealing with minorities, "hippies," war protestors and others has tarnished their image. More recently, however, law enforcement departments across the nation have recruited more minority members and younger, more progressive officers with better educations and keener social insight in order that they more accurately and fairly represent the interests of their communities.

But police are people too. Failure to recognize the frustrations police must cope with in doing their jobs can only exacerbate the problem and further erode respect for law. Many community-minded officers have seen criminals go free after apprehension at personal risk; the clogged courts that leave criminals on the street long after execution of crimes weaken confidence in the system; the seeming impunity of major criminals suggests corruption in high places. Given these conditions, the risks are too great, the personal abuse too constant, and lack of community support too frequent to promote enlightened as well as effective law enforcement.

These are sophisticated issues for young minds. Nonetheless, the teacher who wishes to communicate with young people about the pressures that affect life in a way relating to risk taking and self-esteem must deal with them in an open, unbiased way.

One of the drug scene ironies educators must face is that some jurisdictions require them to report anything they know concerning drug activity. For the teacher trying to reach a youngster seeking help, this poses a great moral dilemma. One

must either turn away from the child, or by reporting him, destroy any possibility of really helping this or any other young person. Alternatively, one can break the law by ignoring it, thus running the risk of being a reluctant accessory to a crime.

To overcome this problem, some jurisdictions have enacted special legislation called "confidentiality laws" which permit teachers to help young people with drug problems without running afoul of drug laws. Maryland was the first state to enact such legislation, and its law has become the model for similar legislation elsewhere.

Because leveling, open exchange and mutual respect are critical in dealing with young people on the drug issue, it's important that educators involved in such activities acquaint themselves with local drug laws as well as the drug policies of their school or school district. If these policies make no provision for frank and confidential teacher/student exchange, decisions to permit this should be sought.

Reward

The reward pressure concept was probably invented by a goat-cart driver who discovered carrots. The idea that "doing this will get you that" has given more impetus to mankind than the boot and club combined.

For the student, the reward of education (the carrot) too often is the grade. While the trend is away from this in favor of nongrading evaluation techniques, the grade is still used by many teachers as a method of telling a student what is thought about him. The tragedy of the traditional grading system, with all its competitive connotations, is that it often fails to regard the individual in terms of his personal progress. This failure is further complicated by the fact that in some educational institutions, particularly overcrowded inner city schools, behavior often becomes a prime determinant of the grade. Accordingly, many young people with potential, frustrated

with the conditions of their classrooms, become "problems" who are repeatedly failed or sometimes "passed" just to be gotten rid of. With their potential undeveloped and their aspirations ignored, such students are faced with the choice of dropping out or "graduating" as functional illiterates prepared for little or nothing.

The frustration of students struggling for a sense of personal growth and worth within the confines of what is, too often, a custodial situation, also has its counterpart in so-called "better schools." Whereas the high school diploma used to be a meaningful educational terminal point, this is no longer true due to expansion of higher education facilities and a concomitant raising of education requirements by employers. Today, even prosaic jobs often require a college degree as a basic prerequisite, and the high school diploma is significant only in terms of the grades it represents relative to consideration for college entrance. Thus, the reward of good high school grades is a chance to once again chase the carrot of good grades in order to obtain the degree necessary to get a better job.

While the concept of formal education being necessary to "prepare for life" is still valid with respect to cognitive learning, the frequent lack of affective input has left many young people bewildered about themselves and a society which teaches them to aspire to the high-income business or professional worlds while sneering at artisans' occupations.

A significant number of contemporary young people don't respond to the classic education/life plan or feel at odds with the high-income carrot principle. Consequently, they view college education as irrelevant and elitist and either forego it or drop out in favor of simpler lives with greater potential for personal creativity. Instead of "doing this ... to get that" (external reward), the young person today is just as apt to say, "I'll do this only if it makes me feel good about myself" (internal reward).

If reward pressure for students continues along the same lines it traditionally has, and if rigid adherence to codes of behavior continues to preoccupy some educators more than the development of self-esteem, self-realization prospects for their students will remain dim. Given such an atmosphere, it should surprise no one that many young people react in terms of drug misuse.

Insensitive use of discipline relative to reward is illustrated by the experience of a young child who had been told repeatedly to "be quiet and behave." When found sitting alone in an empty classroom and asked what he was doing there, he replied, "I'm being-have."

3. making better decisions

Our society reveres the decision maker. In our folklore, such a figure is a person of determination, strength and leadership quality. He (the figure invariably seems to be male) is something of a hero.

We lionize the decision maker because we perceive he has faced certain risks ... and overcome them by his decision. In the case of a President facing a missile crisis, the relationship of risk taking to decision making is clear. We see it also for the battle-winning general, goal-making football player and even the winner of the Irish Sweepstakes.

What we don't perceive is that *all* people are decision makers and that risk taking is invariably part of the decision-making process. At minimum, the risk we take with any decision is that it proves to be less than the best choice. For some, a question as mundane as "What shall I wear today?" may imply the same kind of anxiety, on the personal scale, as a top executive's determination to invest millions in a new enterprise.

Failure to recognize the importance of decision making for everyone — particularly for the young — is failure to recognize a very important universal human activity.

While everyone is experienced in decision making, few are consistently good at it, and fewer still at ease with the process. In important measure, the anxiety associated with decision making comes about because we have an imperfect vision of ourselves and the way in which we relate to others who may be affected by the decision or pass judgment on it.

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Overcoming decision-making inhibitions requires fortification in three essential and related areas. First, there is a need for a clearer picture of ourselves as a prerequisite for fully appreciating our feelings about given decisions; second, there is a need for better techniques in communicating those feelings to others; and third, there is a need for a system of evaluating decisions to be certain they truly reflect what we feel.

Behavioral scientists, studying these problems, have made important strides in recent years. Experiential learning techniques have been developed which have proved effective in overcoming the societal and self-imposed restraints which hinder the kind of personal recognition and expression essential to the decision-making process. And, a system has been developed whereby personal decisions can be evaluated to learn if they truly reflect the feelings of the person who has made them.

The beauty of it all is that the techniques for experiential learning and values clarification (as the decision/evaluation system is called) can be easily mastered and applied. For the educator concerned with destructive behaviors such as drug misuse, these learning techniques, combined with an understanding of the linkage between formative pressures, risk taking, and the decision-making process, become humanistic tools with which he can build the elements of self-esteem essential to positive growth and learning.

* * *

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

The basic idea of experiential learning is that if you can get people to share feelings within the context of special situations ("experiences") specifically designed to give dimension to identity and provide a better, nonthreatening way of communicating, the participants will make valuable discoveries about themselves and others that will result in a more positive way of dealing with life.

The way in which this is achieved is remarkably simple — as several sample experiences in the Appendix demonstrate. In the main, the teacher employs a series of experiences — usually of increasing sophistication — as he works with participants to overcome their uneasiness about revealing themselves and dealing with others on personal terms.

At the outset, he will usually employ exercises designed to "break the ice," giving participants some awareness of one another. Openers might be simple name-games in which participants go around a circle introducing one another or telling something about their neighbor based on brief "pick-a-partner" chats about "what I like to do for fun." As the exercises progress, participants might have to deal with such matters as word association ("strong as a bull"), bragging (is it really bad?), positive focus ("five nice things about me are ..."), and so forth.

Neither special equipment nor an elaborate setting is necessary for experiential learning. The usual requirements are: a trained leader to act as a guide and a catalyst; the participants; a room large enough to hold everyone comfortably and informally; and simple things like paper and pencils, and perhaps a blackboard and chalk.

The participants need not know one another at the outset; indeed it's often better if they don't as one of the great things that happens with experiential learning is discovering new ways to know strangers quickly and personally.

Many of the experiences can be applied on a one-to-one basis, but most work best in group situations. Also, while many of the experiences are designed for people past the elementary school age, even those designed for younger people can often be used effectively with older groups. It is sometimes said that one can be too young for some experiential learning, but one can never be too old.

The number and variety of exercises that can be used in experiential learning is remarkably great, and people engaged in this process are constantly developing new experiences or modifying existing ones to better fit particular requirements. Excellent samples of experiences designed for all kinds of learning problems may be found in the Appendix.

Freedom from Fears

Most of us are reluctant to express our thinking and feelings, fearing we shall be thought stupid, silly, square, cowardly, incompetent and generally unattractive. Therefore, we are often afraid to speak out, dance, paint, sing or read aloud, try something new, approach people or even love.

As the objective of experiential learning is to free people from needless fears that are self-imposed or inspired by others and, by so doing, liberate the power to create, to think, to learn, and feel good about life, the teacher must show great sensitivity in working with participants.

The instructions applicable to most experiential learning situations are as follows: the participant is encouraged to be as truthful and honest as possible; he is urged not to be too modest about his good qualities and is told it's OK to mention things about himself he perceives not to be good; and he is also cautioned not to exaggerate his good qualities or his deficiencies, common mistakes that many make.

The instructions for groups generally follow these lines: first, really listen to others and try not to interrupt. Interruption

is identified as a sign that one isn't interested in the other person. Paying attention makes the speaker feel good. Interrupting makes the speaker feel bad, thus discouraging sharing on his part. People respond both to good feelings and bad. When feelings are bad, an insurmountable communications wall is thrown up; when feelings are good, people are grateful and friendship is possible.

Also, feel free to tell others what you like about them by praising their good qualities. People so treated will want to respond in a positive way, cooperate, work harder, share more, and equally important, to look for good qualities in others. Being negative is just as easy, but the result of this is to create an adversary who is defensive, suspicious and closed to constructive collaboration on any level.

Finally, be honest when praising, saying only that which is sincerely felt. An insincere compliment, no matter how attractive, can arouse suspicion on the part of the recipient. He will think he is being softened up for some exploitive purpose. For some people, particularly those with a poor sense of self-esteem, any compliment may be viewed with suspicion. For these individuals, it might be necessary to explain *why* one admires a certain characteristic. (Example: "I think you are a sensitive person because you made a point of asking Mary to join us when you noticed she was holding back.")

Whatever the approach, the experience should demonstrate that a sense of self-esteem is a fundamental requirement of human life. In a world of increasing interdependence, the degree to which we are successful in fortifying self-esteem is the degree to which we attain that which is worth having.

* * *

VALUES CLARIFICATION

No one has yet devised a foolproof system to evaluate decision making, but considerable thought has been given to a technique for improving the process. The technique is called "values clarification."

Essentially, values clarification is an approach to communicating which enables the person expressing himself to do so in a manner which will most honestly reflect how he feels. The greatest benefit of values clarification is that it enables an individual to understand himself better while improving his communications with others.

For the teacher concerned about opening meaningful avenues of communication with students, familiarity with the basic values clarification process can provide the additional benefit of improving communication in many other areas including: teacher/teacher, teacher/administrator, teacher/parent, and teacher/community.

While there are some variations in the way in which values clarification can be described, it is essentially a three-phase process with two clarifying steps in each phase.* The phases are choosing, prizing and acting.

In the choosing phase, values clarification is accomplished by examining whether a decision is made freely and after thoughtful consideration of alternatives.

In the prizing phase, values clarification discloses if the choice is cherished and one which the decision maker would be willing to affirm publicly.

In the acting phase, values clarification reveals if the

*A modification based on the Raths, Harmin and Simon construct in *Values and Teaching: Working with Values in the Classroom*. Columbus, OH.: Charles E. Merrill Books, 1966).

decision maker actually does anything with his choice — and if he is sure he would do it again.

Values clarification is accomplished through application of simple questions and strategies regarding these phases — questions whose purpose is to make certain that a feeling expressed is truly reflective of an attitude held.

While values clarification works best on a one-to-one basis, it is possible to use clarifying responses with more than one person at a time. The kinds of expressions that reflect attitudes, aspirations, interests, purposes, convictions, worries and opinions are those for which the process is most effective. Key phrases requiring clarification are those which include terms such as: *I'm for, I'm against, I believe, I think, I prefer, I hate, I love*, and so forth.

In using the technique, it's essential that no statements be made which could cause embarrassment or anger for the respondent. An attitude of acceptance is very important in dealing with values expressed by others, even if the ideas are at odds with one's own feelings. Once again, sensitivity to the internal and external factors affecting behavior is critical to the success of the process whose goal should always be the reenforcement of self-esteem. In this sense, there are no "right" or "wrong" answers in response to clarifying questions. The appropriate answer will be found by the respondent himself. The values clarification process will serve only to stimulate self-examination in a gentle way.

Questions used as clarifiers should be brief and simple. It is also important to avoid a barrage of questions, as this could lead to a feeling of interrogation. Remember, too, that the responses are not too important to the person asking the clarifying questions; they are of real value only to the respondent.

What follows is not to be taken literally as the only way values clarification can be accomplished. But by applying these kinds of clarifying questions to the steps of the process, a fuller comprehension of self with concomitant gain in self-appreciation can result.

Choosing

Choosing Freely. The degree to which one's decisions are independently made is often reflective of the value placed on such decisions by those who make them. Nonetheless, because of pressures to conform, or for other reasons, we often make decisions which are less our own than we think. Consequently, it's important to use values clarification techniques to examine decisions more closely. Typical of the clarifying questions applied to this values step are:

Where did you get that idea? ... How long have you felt that way? ... Are you the only one in your group who feels this way? ... What does your family think of this? ... Are you getting help from anyone? ... Do you need more help? ... Can I help? ... What would people say if you didn't do what you say you'll do? ... How much time would you devote to this? ... Does your choice have anything to do with approval by others?

Choosing Thoughtfully and from Alternatives. While it is impossible to eliminate "gut" reactions from decision making (and, indeed, there is some validity to "gut" feelings), it's generally true that the most viable decisions are those arrived at in a reflective way that also considers alternatives. Clarifiers in this area might include:

Have you thought about this very much? ... How did you think this through? ... Are you saying that (intepreting the statement)? ... Are you implying that (distorting the statement so that he must correct it)? ... Would you please define your terms to be sure I understand them? ... What assumptions have you made in reaching this decision? ... Have you considered

alternatives? ... What are they? ... What would be the consequences of the alternatives? ... Have you ranked the alternatives in order of significance? ... What would be the effect of your choice on the alternatives? ... For whom are you doing this? ... Did you talk to anyone about your choice? ... What have others said about your decision? ... Why is this a good choice? ... Where will it lead?

Prizing

Cherishing. Feeling good about a decision is as important as feeling good about any other aspect of human endeavor. While there are times we make hesitant decisions we later feel confident about, it's more often true that decisions reluctantly made become problematic. Clarifiers that can reveal how we feel about decisions could include:

Are you glad you feel this way? ... How long have you wanted this? ... Why is this decision good? ... What purpose does it serve? ... Why is it important to you? ... Should everyone do this your way? ... Is it something you really prize? ... In what way would life be different without this?

Affirming. Standing up for one's belief is a Western philosophical concept that goes back at least to the time of the Magna Charta. Yet, the pressure for conformity in contemporary society is such that the individual who espouses atypical views does so at personal risk. While it is relatively simple to be counted with the majority, it is equally important that encouragement be given to being counted when a divergent view is held. In the decision-making process, particularly as it applies to young people, the matter of affirmation is of critical importance. Clarifying questions that can be used in this values step could include:

Are you willing to tell someone else how you feel? ... Would you be willing to sign a petition supporting your view? ... Are you saying that you believe (repeating the idea)? ...

Should people who believe as you do speak out? ... Do other people know how you feel about this? ... Are you willing to stand up and be counted for this?

Acting

Acting Upon Choices. Acting upon choices is, in some measure, another form of affirmation. The principal difference here is that the individual is confronted with the possibility of taking steps, either singly or with others, which puts his beliefs on the line in an active, rather than philosophically limited way. Some typical clarifiers:

I hear what you are for; now, what can you do about it? ... Are you willing to commit personal resources to this? ... Would you join an organization committed to this purpose? ... What have you already done for this purpose? ... What more could you do? ... Are you letting others know what you are doing? ... What if they disagree with your decision? ... Where will this lead you? ... How far are you willing to go? ... What are the consequences of what you do? ... How has your decision already affected your life? ... How will it affect it in the future?

Repeating. Repeating can be a useful values step in the decision-making process in two ways revealed through clarification: it either confirms the validity of a decision or it suggests that the decision, though fully considered, affirmed and acted upon, proved, upon experience, to be invalid. The bromide "You have made your bed; now you must lie upon it" has no place here. One of the purposes of living is to test the worth of values and concepts previously developed. In the final analysis, the living experience is fundamental to learning and growth and is a process that continues throughout life. To be able to say, "I was wrong about that" should prove as

meaningful to the individual as to be able to assert the correctness of a decision previously made. Some clarifiers:

How long have you felt this way? ... What have you done in support of your choice? ... How often do you do it? ... Do you plan to do it more? ... What are your plans for doing more? ... Do you try to interest others in your choice? ... Do you try to involve others in what you do? ... Has it been worth the time and expense? ... What other things could you do that would serve the same purpose? ... How long will you continue to do this? ... What did you not do because of what you did? ... Was it alright not to have done those things? ... How did you decide what had priority? ... Did what you do cause problems? ... What were the problems and how did you resolve them? ... Would you do it all again?

* * *

Clarifying Clarifying

Raths, Harmin and Simon, who have contributed much to current thinking about values clarification, make this important observation:

> Clarifying is an honest attempt to help a student look at his life and to encourage him to think about it in an atmosphere in which positive acceptance exists. Students will probably not enter into the perplexing process of clarifying values for themselves if they perceive that the teacher does not respect their viewpoint. If trust is not communicated, the student may well play the game, pretending to clarify and think and choose and prize but being unaffected by the exchange as by a tiresome morality lecture.

As important as knowing what clarifying *is*, is knowing what it is *not*. Most significantly, clarifying is not therapy and should not be used on persons with serious emotional problems. While some aspects of the process resemble certain psychological techniques or sensitivity training, clarifying should not be regarded or employed in this way. However, as with psychological or psychiatric methodology, it should not be used by persons who are themselves emotionally "at sea."

Clarifying also isn't a one-shot sort of thing. Indeed, one shouldn't expect a very meaningful response to it on first exposure. To be meaningful, clarifying must be applied consistently over an extended period of time. A clue to its success can be found in its use by the student in his dealings with others (which will probably happen before he is ready to use it on his teacher).

Clarifying isn't an interview activity nor should it be done in a formal, structured way. Most importantly, it should never become a vehicle for moralizing, indoctrinating, or dogmatizing. An educator with strong views relating to his

personal life decisions will have an opportunity to reveal (and examine) those views when he and the student have reached a level of trust and sharing in which the student seeks out those opinions. The teacher's opinions will be best respected if conveyed in this fashion — even though the student may still choose to feel differently on certain points.

Another thing clarifying is *not* designed to do is to replace a teacher's other educational functions. What clarifying does is to create a climate of acceptance wherein both educator and student have a chance to understand each other better as people — along with some of the internal and external shaping pressures — so that the business of learning can proceed unencumbered by emotional misunderstanding or insensitivity.

When such conditions prevail, the importance of the individual as an individual becomes more apparent. For the young person faced with all the problems of "growing up" in an increasingly indifferent world, the degree to which this worth is self-perceived is the degree to which he is equipped to make life-positive decisions for himself.

4. valuing values

In much the same way as an educator must understand the personal internal and external pressures that shape the way he deals with things or responds to people, he must also apply values clarification techniques to his own thinking before he can guide others in their use.

This is not to say that he must rid himself of all emotional content in the way he responds to students or others; on the contrary, emotional content is what makes his response human and therefore, understandable. What self-imposed values clarification can do for the teacher is better equip him to understand *why* he tends to respond in certain ways by eliminating the possibility of inconsistencies in thought that otherwise plague communication, especially on the one-to-one level. So conditioned, the teacher is better equipped to ask appropriate clarifying questions in a manner that neither projects his bias nor loads the question in a way which obviates a truly clarifying response.

The Gap Trap

While no one would deny the necessity for good communication to enhance interpersonal appreciation and, ultimately, self-esteem, the fact remains that a major block toward accomplishing this end is that our society maintains some strong differences about what *fundamental* values should be. These differences most often are identified along generational lines, with the more traditional views being fiercely defended by parents and other older people (including teachers) who often dismiss "new" views as the fuzzy thinking of inexperienced youth.

In dealing with one another, the sides in this philosophical tug-of-war often display dogmatism or resort to "killer statements" (put-downs) rather than face the issues of the moment. In frustration, the adversaries cite "generation gap" as the insurmountable obstacle in their failure to understand one another.

Because they are unwilling to see the gap as one of communication, rather than generation, the chasm grows in areas where significant value dichotomies occur. Among them: "X" says that personal satisfaction comes mainly from *achievement* after substantial investments of energy; "Y" says personal satisfaction is found in *experience* and one should always be willing to try something. "X" says that the *future* is the important time zone of life, and all we do should be oriented to some goal ahead; "Y" says *now* is life's important time zone and preoccupation with the future is foolish. "X" says man should be *aggressive* and willing to fight for what he wants; "Y" says a *passive* attitude is best and that everything comes along in its own moment. "X" says *form* is important and that society functions best when everyone knows what to expect of others; "Y" says *content* is important and it doesn't matter how or what you do as long as you don't hurt anyone. And so forth.

What "X" and "Y" fail to perceive is that they are both right ... which is why it is imperative that each one become aware of the shaping pressures of life and the need for values clarification in making the kinds of decision that will enhance self-esteem and obviate destructive behaviors, such as drug misuse and generation gap cop-out.

Sensitized through awareness of the pressures that shape behavior and fortified with the knowledge of values clarification and what it can do, the educator can still falter if he devalues the feelings of others through the superimposition of his own.

Though this has been stated before, it cannot be repeated too vigorously because it's an extremely easy trap to fall into.

particularly for teachers who are, by conditioning and inclination, imparters of knowledge. Ego considerations are also part of this picture: the teacher role demands the kind of person who enjoys being stage center and managing others, and this is at odds with values clarification leadership which requires the exercise of prodigious self-restraint.

There are some other rules of the road the teacher should fully understand about the clarifying process. To begin with, the chances for success in applying the principles are better when others are also aware of them. After all, it's not a secret thing, a form of intellectual entrapment which only authority figures can use. Then too, responses are more likely to be genuine when everyone can function according to the same rules. Equally important, it should be clear that one has the right *not* to participate if one chooses, and, there should never be any sense of censure or disapproval associated with this.

Faultlessly treading the line between overreaction and underreaction is a challenge few people could meet. The response appropriate to one youngster's expression of feeling could be all wrong for another, and even the most sensitive educators will be unable to reach certain students some of the time and other students at any time. The important thing is to try to be consistent in the way in which one deals with others so that even if the response proves insufficient, the sincerity of the effort is evident.

Respect

Respect for teachers is a centuries-old idea. For western man, the Judeo/Christian heritage fortifies the concept through both Old and New Testaments. In eastern philosophies, the teacher is revered among men. Almost every culture, including the most primitive, assigns the teacher an exalted role in its society.

A newer concept holds that students, too, warrant respect. This idea is not revolutionary; it is a natural conclusion that has evolved in societies where the total population is educated to

think for itself and assume more independent responsibility for personal action.

While much lip-service is given to the new concept, traditional patterns of thinking which maintain stringent authority roles for teachers vis-a-vis students are still very much with us. Teachers so oriented see their principal purpose as being transmitters of cognitive material under conditions in which behavioral performance may mean as much as academic achievement. In such a milieu, respect for teachers is assumed. Whatever respect is given students tends to reflect the degree to which students accept traditional subservient roles.

The necessity for genuine mutual respect has become dramatically apparent in recent years partly in response to growing concern about such subjects as drug misuse and the frequent inability of teachers, parents, and the community to reach young people on this and other issues.

Partly in response to this concern, an increasing amount of attention has been focused on *affective* modes of teaching — which, in turn, lends impetus to the need for developing experiential learning and values clarification as part of the decision-making process.

But dealing with feelings is an exercise in futility if respect is only a one-way street. Today's young person has a high awareness level of what is or is not genuine in dealing with authority figures. While he does not reject authority out of hand, he no longer mindlessly accedes to it. The current attitude seems to be: "You have no right to try to superimpose your views on me ... but I'm willing to listen to what they are if you will listen to me."

For many teachers, working with students in terms of values clarification will mean a whole new way of doing things. The kind of educator who feels it's important for students to consider the *feelings* of those who shaped the Declaration of Independence in 1776 is more likely to make the event understandable than the teacher who simply recites the fact of

the occurrence. It is essential for students and educators alike to extrapolate from this to contemporary issues — including drugs. Feelings behind an issue are important for today's young.

One other significant change in teaching style for those who employ experiential learning and values clarification techniques is that teachers will be obliged to do a lot less talking and a lot more listening. One doesn't simply walk into a room and say, "OK, today we're going to do values clarification." Learning needs will still be much as they have been, except that educators will have to be better attuned to values statements which provide opportunities to get closer to where the feelings are.

Respect, freely given, is a form of love. And like love, it doesn't bloom unrequited.

looking ahead

One of the ironies of life is that we are willing to commit vast resources to dealing with problems after the fact but are unwilling to invest much in problem prevention. This has been, and continues to be, the main thrust of the drug dilemma.

One reason for this may be our great passion for technology and activities that lend themselves to the mathematics of the statistician's slide rule; we like to reassure ourselves that all is well by looking at percentages, rather than people.

Because what is proposed here is a plan for the long haul — and, moreover, one whose influence cannot be limited to the drug scene — it will be impossible to calibrate its efficacy in any of the usual ways. Self-esteem is a qualitative, not quantitative aspect of life.

The only way in which numbers can be applied to the concept is in the sense that its *best* chance for success would occur if many would commit themselves to its principles. Still, if only one of the teachers a young person encounters could use the principles to instill a sense of self-worth in a child who might not otherwise achieve this, the influence of that one teacher could spell the difference between a life lost to self-destructive behavior and one with a positive orientation.

It's in the nature of things that we resist change when the change implies that we haven't done our best. But if we can give up the idea that serious drug misuse is a singular problem and accept instead the thought that it is symptomatic of something more profound, some fundamental deficiency, then the need for a fundamental change in the way we deal with youth becomes obvious.

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The drug alternative concept asks much of educators in that it requires a willingness to accept change both in attitudinal and procedural ways. Hopefully, teachers won't view this as condemnation of what they've done before. As stated in the beginning of this book, our collective failure to deal properly with the drug problem bespeaks no lack of good will, it only underscores a lack of tools to do the job.

But the tools are now available to those who wish to employ them — provided there is understanding of the linkage between formative pressures, risk taking and decision making — and a willingness to employ the self-esteem building principles bearing on these factors.

It takes courage and determination to deal with oneself and others according to the precepts of these pages.

Self-esteem is the name of the game. The message is: "Be what you want; love what you are."

6. appendix

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING EXERCISES

The six sample "experiences" which follow are indicative of the scope and variety of methods which can be used with groups and individuals to open communication with others, enhance self-discovery, and strengthen self-esteem. The first three are suitable for any age group. The last three are designed for people beyond the elementary level.

Fun

Fun is a simple exercise designed for groups of any age but also usable for individuals. Clusters of 6 to 10 people (up to 30 total per group) can participate. The objective is to put participants at ease, let them get to know each other better, sharpen their sense of individuality, and encourage them to feel good about themselves.

Taking the word FUN and beginning with the first letter, F, to stand for *Favorite Activity*, each person is asked: "What is your favorite activity?"

In one sentence, each person describes his favorite activity to others in his group.

"Using the second letter, U, to stand for *Undertaking Underway*, describe some project you are currently working on."

Each person briefly explains.

"Using the third letter, N, to stand for *Nice*, tell the group something nice about yourself."

After all participants have been through the exercise, the leader asks each one to describe, in a single word, how he feels. Following this, the leader shares his feelings with the group. The consequence of these activities is that participants are able to associate faces (names) with feelings; people are more at ease; and members of the group develop a sense of warmth for one another.

Association

A technique sometimes (and often unconciously) used to identify people is that of association. Common examples are: "... strong as a bull ... dumb as an ox ... pretty as a rose ... she's a tomato ... that one's a dog," and so on.

The object of this exercise is to utilize associational thought as an aid to thinking and increasing awareness of the stimuli to which one reacts. It is also a good technique to reveal bias stemming from internal and external pressure conditioning. The exercise works best in a group where the participants have some information about one another. Up to 15 pairs can participate. Each participant needs a sheet of paper and a pencil.

The instructions are as follows:

"Using only one or two words for your reply, and leaving a few lines of space after each answer, please respond to the following question:

"If your partner were a flower, what flower would he be?

"If your partner were an automobile, what model would he be?

"If your partner were a color ...

"If your partner were an animal ...

"If your partner were a song ..."

And so forth.

Following the conclusion of a list of such terms, the participants are asked to explain why they selected the choices they made. (An "I don't know" is an acceptable answer if the reason is unclear.)

Dealing with abstractions is a valuable exercise for those concerned with values clarification. One of the things it reveals is the necessity for precision in choosing the words we use to communicate with one another. Although the English language is rich in its variations, it is also subject to misinterpretation, as anyone forced to communicate with abstract terms is quick to discover.

Bragging

The objective of this activity is to have individuals look at themselves and identify skills, accomplishments and qualities they feel good about; see the same attributes in others; and feel comfortable about sharing these feelings with others even though our society condemns expressions of self-esteem (bragging).

A group (20 to 30 persons) is divided into clusters of 3 to 5 people, with any number of clusters functioning at one time. Participants are given a few moments to determine the order of bragging and to think over what they want to say, then each person gets a minute to tell the others how and why he's so special. After all have had a turn, participants can question one another about what they said.

The exercise tends to be fun. It is also boisterous at times.

In group discussion following the activity, a number of interesting questions bearing on self-esteem can be examined. Among them: What is society's attitude about bragging? ... Why are we always expected to be humble? ... Does the sharing of positive qualities help develop positive attitudes? ... What is worth bragging about? ... Are positive facts really boasts?

Five-Minute Person

This experience is a splendid icebreaker for a group of unacquainted people (up to 20 in number).

Participants are paired with partners they don't know and are instructed to "tell one another who you are." Each person is given five minutes to describe himself before the roles are reversed. "Listeners" are encouraged to ask questions to better understand the descriptions.

After approximately 10 minutes, the group is reassembled and each person has a minute to describe his partner to the others.

Following the individual descriptions, the activity is discussed for its value. These are some of the themes that can be explored at this time: How does one describe oneself? How do you know "who you are"? How do we listen to others? How does the acquaintance process work in reality?

A number of variations of this exercise are possible in which personal attitudes can be revealed through examination of specific topics, such as drugs, sex, or what-have-you. The point of these exercises is as much reflective listening as it is self-revelation. Since the partner must report to the group on the feelings of the other person, it is necessary that each person listen to the other with special care, putting aside personal feelings on the issue at hand. This is of particular value to the individual being introduced to values clarification techniques. Internal and external shaping pressures also come into play here.

Ten Loves

The objective of this experience is to encourage a sense of self-discovery. This is a sophisticated exercise best suited for older students and adults. Because of the self-directed nature of Ten Loves, the number of possible participants is limitless.

Supplies required are a sheet of paper and a pencil. Participants are instructed to draw seven vertical columns, with the first column taking up approximately one third of the page and the remaining six being equal in width. The columns are to be labeled as shown below:

Activities	Risk	Last Done	$5	SP, O, or A	Mom & Dad	5 Years Ago

In the left-hand column, the participant lists the 10 things he most enjoys doing. These can range from purely physical to relatively passive activities. If he feels some risk taking is involved in any of the activities, he puts an "R" next to it. In the third column he notes when he last participated in the activity, and in the fourth column, whether it cost over $5. Next, he indicates whether the activity involves a special person (SP), others (O), him alone (A), or some combination of the above. In the column labeled "Mom & Dad," the participant should make a notation for those activities which either or both parents have done. And in the final column he should indicate whether he did the activity five years ago.

Upon completion of the chart, the instructor should encourage discussion and personal reflection by asking the participants what they have discovered about themselves and what this might mean regarding self-image.

The Most

This activity is best suited for groups that have been functioning together long enough for some reasonable sense of one another to have developed. The value in the exercise is to require perception of positive traits in the participants. (It is also possible to assign these traits to oneself.)

(A word of caution: this exercise is not a popularity contest and no "scores" should be kept. The completed paper should be seen only by the person who fills it out.)

Each person is given a printed sheet of paper that has 11 statements and the following directions: "Fill in the blanks with names of *people in the room now*. You may use your own name if you choose." The statements are:

The person I *know best* is _____
The person I'm *least afraid of* is _____
The *friendliest* person is _____
The *warmest* person is _____
The *most energetic* person is _____
The *most independent* person is _____
The *most mature* person is _____
The person *most interested in others* is _____
The *funniest* person is _____
The *most understanding* person is _____
The person I *trust most* is _____

Participants are also given an opportunity to add any other statements they wish on the lower half of the page.

After the exercise is completed, the leader can call on a few participants to indicate their choices for certain categories. He can also ask them why they selected the person they named. A good technique is to ask for "different" names for the same category or to shift categories to obtain additional names. (However, a total rundown is not advisable lest anyone be hurt by being excluded from all lists!) One of the important areas for discussion is the inclusion or exclusion of the participants' own name in the statements. Encouragement should be given to positive recognition of self as being more constructive than self-effacement.

SELECTED READINGS

In recent years, a number of interesting books have been published which relate to concepts discussed in these pages. The list below is a limited selection of books recommended by individuals on the Advisory Committee for this volume.

A Strategy for Teaching Values. Pleasantville, NY: Guidance Associates, n.d.

Brown, George. *Human Teaching for Human Learning: An Introduction to Confluent Education*. New York: Viking Press, 1971.

Dodder and Dodder. *Decision-Making*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1968.

Edwards, G. *Reaching Out: The Prevention of Drug Abuse through increased Human Interaction*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1973.

Fantini, Mario and Weinstein, Gerald, *Making Urban Schools Work*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1968.

Fraenkel, Jack R., *Helping Students Think and Value*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973.

Freed, Alvyn M. *T.A. for Kids*, 1971. Available from Alvyn M. Freed, 391 Munroe St., Sacramento, CA 95825.

Glasser, William. *Schools Without Failure*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969.

Gordon, Thomas. *Parent Effectiveness Training: The "No-lose" Program for Raising Responsible Children*. New York: Peter H. Wyden, Inc., 1970.

Harris, Thomas. *I'm O.K., You're O.K.: A Practical Guide to Transactional Analysis*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969.

Holt, John. *What Do I Do Monday?* New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1970.

James, Muriel and Jongeward, Dorothy. *Born to Win*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1971.

Lederman, Janet. *Anger and the Rocking Chair: Gestalt Awareness with Children.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969.

Lyon, Harold C. *Learning to Feel – Feeling to Learn.* Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1971.

Pfeiffer, J.W. and Jones, J.E. *Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training*, n.d. Vols. 1-3. Available from University Associates Press, P.O. Box 615, Iowa City, IA. 55240.

Piaget, Jean. *Science of Education and the Psychology of the Child.* New York: Viking Press, 1971.

Raths, Louis et al. *Values and Teaching: Working with Values in the Classroom.* Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1966.

Repo, Satu. *This Book is About Schools.* New York: Vintage Press, 1971.

Rogers, Carl. *Freedom to Learn.* Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1969.

Rucker, W. Ray et al. *Human Values in Education.* Dubuque, IA: Kendall-Hunt Publishing Co., 1969.

Simon, Sidney B.; Howe, Leland W.; and Kirschenbaum, Howard. *Values Clarification: A Handbook of Practical Strategies for Teachers and Students.* New York: Hart Publishing Co., 1972.

Zuckerman, D.W. and Horn, R.E. *The Guide to Simulation Games for Education and Training*, n.d. Available from Information Resources, Inc., 1675 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA. 02138.

DRUG/ALCOHOL INFORMATION SOURCES

The following agencies are recommended as good sources for current information on drug and alcohol misuse. A variety of published materials are available through them (many without cost), and they can also recommend drug misuse materials available elsewhere.

National Clearing House for Alcohol Information. P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

National Clearing House for Drug Information. P.O. Box 1908, Rockville, Maryland 20850.

National Coordinating Council on Drug Education. 1526 Eighteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Special Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention. Executive Office of the President, Washington, D.C. 20506.